

THE BRAILLE MONITOR

INKPRINT EDITION

VOICE OF THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND



The National Federation of the Blind is not an organization speaking for the blind--it is the blind speaking for themselves

N.F.B. Headquarters
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THE BRAILLE MONITOR

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NFB ACTS IN VITAL COURT CASE

The responsibility of relatives--a welfare provision of crucial importance to the blind--has been newly attacked by the National Federation of the Blind in a brief submitted to the United States Supreme Court in connection with the case of Department of Mental Hygiene v. Kirchner.

The Kirchner case is currently on appeal from a landmark decision handed down last year by the California Supreme Court, which held unconstitutional a statute imposing liability on the relatives of a mentally ill person receiving state institutional care. Because the outcome of the case potentially entails huge expenditures of state funds, the California Attorney General obtained a writ of certiorari from the United States Supreme Court for further review.

In view of the great significance of the Kirchner case to blind Americans, as well as the need to rid all state aid programs of onerous responsible-relatives requirements, the NFB on January 7 filed its brief with the United States Supreme Court as a "friend of the Court" (that is, a group which is not a party to the case but has a special interest in its outcome). The Federation's brief was prepared by Albert Bendich, Berkeley attorney and University of California faculty member. Bendich, a former student of Professor Jacobus tenBroek, spoke at the NFB's Phoenix convention last summer on his role as counsel for Benny Parrish, the blind California social worker who was fired two years ago for refusing to take part in night raids upon the homes of welfare clients.

In his present brief, Bendich relies heavily upon two articles by Professor tenBroek on "California's Dual System of Family Law," recently published in the Stanford Law Review, and indicates that the third article of the series will be forthcoming this spring.

The brief emphasizes the general objectives of the National Federation as an organization of blind people, and in particular, its dedication to the removal of so-called "responsible relatives" provisions from state welfare laws. Recalling that the Federation's efforts were partially fulfilled in 1961 when California eliminated these provisions from its programs for the blind and the disabled, the brief argues that all such provisions "are incompatible with the guarantees of equal protection in the Fourteenth Amendment" and that the classification of "responsible relatives" bears no reasonable relation to the purposes of welfare, is irrational and adverse to and incompatible with the interests of those receiving welfare assistance and hence to the entire community."

The NFB's brief asserts that the requirement of relatives responsibility imposes "a species of special and discriminatory taxation of a regressive nature" upon a special group identifiable only by its relationship to "a class of poor and afflicted persons." Thus the effect of the requirement is held to be that of "the arbitrary and discriminatory reduction of cost to the public at the expense of the relatives of those persons receiving welfare assistance."

Even if the concept of relatives responsibility could be regarded as plausible, the NFB maintains, the fact is that California has abolished the requirement for its blind and disabled recipients but not for its mentally defective recipients. For this reason the California Supreme Court held that the mentally defective were being singled out for discriminatory treatment and that the requirement in their case constituted a violation of the principle of equal protection of the laws.

The oral arguments in the Kirchner case were heard by the United States Supreme Court on January 18, with attorneys for both parties participating. Under the rules the NFB, as a friend of the Court, was barred from taking part in these arguments. With the case now resting, it is expected that the Supreme Court's decision will be handed down before the expiration of the present term in June. The BRAILLE MONITOR will, of course, keep watch on the proceedings and report the Court's finding in this crucial case as soon as it is announced.

ADVANCES FOR THE BLIND IN JORDAN

By

Dr. Isabelle L. D. Grant

S. T. Dajani, whose stimulating paper on blind welfare in Jerusalem was read at the NFB's Phoenix convention last summer, is the founder of the Society for the National Library of the Blind, a newly established organization in Jordan for the purpose of promoting the education of blind persons through formation of a central braille library. He is also founder and principal of the 'Ala-iyā School for the Blind in Jordan.

The library project has been approved by the government of Jordan and by the country's organizations of the blind. An endowment fund has been created, and eighty volumes have already been transcribed in the Arabic language. These books are hand-transcribed, involving intensive and sustained work. Mr. Dajani reports an

increasing degree of national awareness of the need for such a library, with school children all over the country subscribing to the cause. Present housing facilities for the library are totally inadequate, making the procurement of a building a vital necessity.

Ever since I visited with Mr. and Mrs. Dajani in 1959, I have been in correspondence with both of them. He is a graduate of the American University at Beirut, Lebanon--the only blind person to graduate from that institution. His school is in the small town of Remallah, just outside Jerusalem, Jordan. Although small, the school offers excellent instruction under Mr. Dajani's personal guidance. However, I would like to have seen girls also sharing in the privileges of this fine educational facility, which is supported by the government.

For those wishing to help Mr. Dajani's vitally needed library project, his address is: Post Office Box 696, Remallah, Hashemite Jordan.

U.S. BLIND UNDER-REPRESENTED IN WCWB

The National Federation of the Blind has called upon the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind to "take action to correct the composition and imbalance" of the Council's American delegation by increasing the proportional representation of organizations of the blind.

In a letter of January 6 to WCWB President Eric Boulter, the National Federation's delegate, Professor Jacobus tenBroek, urged that action to redress the balance be taken under a constitutional amendment adopted by the WCWB Assembly in New York last August.

That amendment provides that "where in any country there exists a substantial group of blind persons organized into associations and where there are blind persons occupying leading positions in agencies for the blind, adequate provision should be made for their representation in the national delegation."

In the United States, Professor tenBroek's letter noted, "there is a substantial group of blind persons organized into associations," along with many blind persons in leading positions with agencies for the blind. But the latter were said to be "excessively represented in the United States delegation" while "the blind people who are organized into associations are altogether inadequately represented."

The organized blind people "have only one out of six seats despite the very great number of blind persons organized in associations in the United States," he said. "Since the constitutional amendment declares that in these circumstances adequate provision should be made for their representation, we are confronted with a situation in which the constitution of the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind is being violated.

"In the normal course of things it would fall to the lot of the president and executive committee of the organization to see that the constitution is duly carried out and that members and organs are in compliance with it," Dr. tenBroek wrote. "That this normal course of things is to be followed with respect to this particular constitutional provision was made clear, as you will recall, by the debates in the Assembly at the time of adoption of the amendment."

"Indeed it was emphatically pointed out in that debate--and this assertion had the general concurrence of those present--that the adoption of the amendment would involve the World Council in determining whether the associations and blind persons mentioned in the amendment do exist in any given country and whether they are given adequate representation."

AN IMPORTANT VICTORY FOR BLIND TEACHERS

In a precedent-setting decision by a New York judge, a blind high school teacher has defeated the efforts of a board of education to reject his application on grounds of blindness.

The decision is the first to be obtained under a 1960 statute secured by the National Federation's New York affiliate, the Empire State Association of the Blind, for the purpose of barring discrimination against blind teachers in the state. As such the judgment should have far-reaching influence in other states where similar laws have been or may be enacted.

The Empire State Association, failing in its earlier efforts to secure passage of the anti-discrimination measure, achieved success in the 1960 legislative session after an active mail campaign together with persistent direct lobbying at the state capital in Albany. However, to gain the lawmakers' approval of the bill, the ESAB had to accept one negative provision: that blind applicants must be certified by the

Commission for the Blind of the State Department of Social Welfare. Although not a factor in the present case, that proviso adds a superfluous and possibly dangerous requirement to the conditions of eligibility by authorizing the welfare agency to pass on the educational credentials of applicants.

The case arose last year when New York City's board of education turned down the application of Alexander Chavich on the ground that he could not carry out the various tasks of a teacher by virtue of "defective vision." Chavich filed his case with the New York Supreme Court, Kings County, and the decision was delivered by Judge Frank J. Pino on August 21, 1964 (Chavich v. Board of Examiners of the Board of Education, 252 N. Y. S. 2d, 718-723).

In support of Chavich's petition, affidavits were obtained from successful blind teachers in various parts of the country, including members of the National Federation of the Blind, as well as from school superintendents and others with firsthand knowledge of the performance of blind teachers -- thus offsetting the adverse testimony of some educators solicited by the city board of education in defense of its action.

In his decision Judge Pino noted that the board of examiners "raise no issue as to petitioner's academic, professional and educational requirements. Further, they admit that petitioner has completed and received ratings of passing grade in the written, interview and performance tests." But Chavich was given an "unsatisfactory" rating in the course of the physical examination, after which two members of the medical staff of the board of education "found petitioner 'not fit' to give continuous and effective service as a teacher because of defective vision, and so recommended to the Board of Examiners."

The judge did not comment upon the absurdity of medical staff members posing as experts on the applicant's teaching abilities. But he did deal emphatically with the attempt by the city board of education to circumvent the clear language of the anti-discrimination law:

"The respondents contend that the statutory prohibition applies only to teaching positions which the Board of Examiners determine can be filled by blind persons. Such a construction would distort the crystal-clear language of the measure. It means what it says: That if this blind petitioner is otherwise qualified he cannot be denied his license as a teacher. If blindness cannot disqualify him, certainly he cannot be disqualified 'because of defective vision' or 'vision inadequate for the duties of the position.'"

Moreover, Judge Pino went beyond the specific case before him to comment on the general issue of the competence of blind persons in the teaching profession. "Petitioner's application is replete with the expressions of an imposing array of authorities in the area of the training and employment of blind persons, which substantiate present-day confidence that blind persons can scientifically acquire required competence in many fields of endeavor, and particularly in the teaching profession," he said.

"Evidence is everywhere at hand, and is indeed convincing, that blindness does not necessarily constitute a bar to the ability of qualified and well-trained persons to perform satisfactorily as teachers in the public school system. There is no question therefore that the legislation is reasonable. The Legislature having thus spoken, its mandate must be followed."

Observing that Chavich "is an unusually well-recommended applicant," the judge quoted at length from favorable testimony submitted by Professor Harry R. Wilson, chairman of the Music Department of Columbia University Teachers College. He noted also that Chavich "has a most impressive background in musical education," including a bachelor's degree from Cincinnati Conservatory of Music and a master's degree from the Manhattan School of Music.

In conclusion the judge directed the board of education to certify Chavich as eligible, to grant him a license and to place his name on the list of eligibles, and added: "The action of the Board of Examiners is arbitrary, capricious and contrary to the Education Law, section 3004."

GOVERNMENT SNOOPING CHARGED

A subcommittee of the U.S. Senate recently made public a comprehensive questionnaire on government snooping, which has been sent to federal administrative agencies -- among them the Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

In releasing the questionnaire, Senator Edward V. Long of Missouri, chairman of the Subcommittee on Administrative Practice and Procedure, said that a preliminary investigation had been quietly underway for several months.

"The further we dig," he said, "the more disturbing information we uncover. Nothing will be gained by a piecemeal investigation. It is high time that the Congress and the public know 'how much' and 'what kind' of snooping is done by our non-security agencies."

Blind Americans will be particularly interested in the committee's findings with respect to snooping practices on the part of public welfare officials, field agents and caseworkers assigned to programs of public assistance, vocational rehabilitation, vending stands and sheltered workshops.

Long said that "advances in the 'state of the art' of surveillance are so startling and snooping gear is becoming so cheap and easy to buy, that the inquiry becomes more urgent every day.

"We know that the agencies purchase much fancy electronic gear. We want to take a long hard look at what it is being used for. Our right to privacy, as Americans, must be zealously guarded," the Senator added.

BARBARA COUGHLAN GIVEN H.E.W. POST

Mrs. Barbara Clark Coughlan, former state director of welfare in Nevada, has been appointed as assistant to the U.S. Commissioner of Welfare for economic opportunity programs. In the newly established post, Mrs. Coughlan will reportedly advise the Commissioner on work-experience and training programs administered by the Welfare Administration under the Economic Opportunity Act. She will also be responsible for a range of liaison functions with the Office of Economic Opportunity and other federal and state agencies concerning anti-poverty projects which require coordinated approaches on the part of several agencies.

During her 14 years as director of Nevada's welfare programs, Mrs. Coughlan maintained close and cordial relations with the NFB's affiliate, the Nevada Federation of the Blind. The excellence of her administration was such that the organized blind in Nevada worked hard and successfully through the legislature to achieve the transfer of services to the blind from the state rehabilitation agency to the welfare department -- with resultant improvement in all programs. Mrs. Coughlan consistently sought the advice and assistance of the Nevada Federation; she was a guest speaker at the NFB's 1956 convention in

San Francisco and in 1959 submitted testimony in support of the National Federation's right-to-organize campaign before Congress.

A graduate of the University of Nevada, Mrs. Coughlan holds a Master of Social Work degree from the University of California. She has served as chairman of the policy committee and as a member of the national board of directors of the American Public Welfare Association, and is a member of the National Association of Social Workers.

Her many friends in the Federation, nationally as well as in her home state, join in wishing Barbara Coughlan success and good fortune in her important new assignment.

STATE REPORT HITS VENDING MACHINES

The problem of the blind businessman versus the robot -- that is, of the vending stand operator faced with the economic competition of automatic vending machines -- is the subject of a special report published last year by the Massachusetts Division of the Blind. The report was the outgrowth of an investigation and study directed by John F. Munro, chief of the division, at the request of the state legislature.

Pointing out that Massachusetts ranks 31st among the states in the number of vending stands operated by blind persons in non-federal buildings, the division's report asserted that the state vending law "in its present form is of dubious if any value in the protection of the interests of the program or for increasing the program's scope on the state level."

On many occasions the division of the blind, seeking to expand the program of vending stands in state buildings beyond the four presently in operation, "has invoked the Vending Stand Law, but to no avail," it was said.

"A recent case in point is that of a state agency occupying privately owned property under a leasing arrangement and finding itself needing food and refreshment services for its numerous employees. With complete disregard for the provisions of the state vending stand law, this agency published invitations to bid for operating a machine vending food service on the premises."

When the agency tried to exclude the division of the blind from consideration by tailoring specifications to machine-style operations, the

division of the blind entered a protest which fell on deaf ears, the report indicated: rather than make way for a blind-operated vending stand, the state agency chose to put off all plans for a food service facility in the area.

Noting that vending machine companies as a matter of practice "offer small commissions from sales of the machine-vended products to agency funds for employee welfare," the report called for a ban on all such "contributions" as a step toward protecting the rights of stand operators under the law.

The division's publication pointed to numerous built-in limitations of vending machine service, of which "the most important is the lack of personal selling." Other shortcomings imposed upon the consumer were said to be:

"(1) The consumer must initiate the sales transaction by coming to the machine. (2) He must determine the specific item he desires upon the basis of the information or the presentation of merchandise offered on the front of the machine. (3) He cannot talk to anyone about the merchandise offered by the machine.

(4) He cannot feel, touch, taste or otherwise examine the products as he usually can in a manual selling operation. (5) Once the consumer has inserted the coin and activated the vender, the transaction is completed; the consumer cannot change his mind. (6) Although a relatively simple mechanical device, vending machines are subject to many mechanical failures. The mechanical failures of the machines are a source of irritation and an incubator of poor relationships with consumers and grantors alike."

In contrast the advantages of the vending stand to consumers were listed as: "(1) Vending stands offer full-time service. (2) Food is purchased in sufficiently small quantities to insure rapid turnover and freshness daily. (3) Stands have a lower overhead, can offer more value for money. (4) Vending stands are beneficial to employee morale. Workers quickly tire of taking their food and beverages from a machine. At the stand, the employees receive food and beverages in a modern, clean and cheery environment. They recognize the vending stand as an agency effort to offer them the best."

As a fifth point in favor of the stands, the report described them as "a study in flexibility," since menus and merchandise can be adjusted to serve the preferences of employees in the building.

In support of its recommendation for strengthened legislation to protect blind operators against the encroachment of automatic machines in the vicinity of stands, the Massachusetts report declared that "in those states having successful vending stand programs for blind persons, we notice the existence of highly clarified, well-structured and definitive legislation giving priority to licensed blind persons to operate vending stands and/or vending machines in public buildings, which also protects such persons and programs from undue encroachment by mechanical competitors. Nationwide, there are 22 states with such statutes in operation."

JOHN NAGLE GAINS MORE RECOGNITION

John F. Nagle, chief of the National Federation's Washington office, was featured in an interview article published in the January 1965 issue of TALKING BOOK TOPICS, an official publication of the Division for the Blind of the Library of Congress. Nagle was coupled with Irvin P. Schloss, legislative analyst for the American Foundation for the Blind, as "the national Capitol's 'men on the scene' in keeping legislators informed and interested" in matters concerning the welfare of the blind.

The article noted that "during the past thirty years the federal government has become a major contributor of financial assistance, special services and vocational rehabilitation programs for the blind. As the importance of this government role continues to expand, there is an ever-greater need to acquaint Congressmen with the facts and problems of blindness and to encourage them in recommending effective legislation."

Reviewing the difficult and many-faceted process of translating social problems into effective legislation, the journal commented: "The most difficult part of the process for Nagle and Schloss, whether working independently or in tandem on a project, is to see the bills reported favorably out of committee and back to the floor of the House or Senate. With this hurdle successfully surmounted, they continue to provide additional information before the final vote.

"With many different levels of action and many bills under consideration at one time, it is extremely necessary to 'operate with a high degree of optimism and self-confidence,' Nagle said. Legislative crises can easily develop at a number of points in the long procedure of passage."

PUBLIC AID AND PRIVATE RIGHTS

The vast changes which have taken place in American society and its economy over recent decades have affected the lives and fortunes of all of us in countless ways. Even as they have solved old problems, they have given rise to new ones no less troubling and portentous. One of the most fundamental of these new problems is that presented by the enormous expansion of governmental power and influence over the lives of citizens--a problem of immediate concern to blind Americans and others dependent upon public aids and services.

Despite the evident need for fresh thinking to meet the range of the problems set in motion by these social transformations, there has been little recognition of the extent of the danger--and still less constructive effort to seek solutions which will protect the rights and liberties of citizens while accommodating the newly expansive role of government.

One such constructive effort has been made by Charles A. Reich, a Yale University professor of law, in a comprehensive article entitled, "The New Property," published in the YALE LAW JOURNAL (April, 1964). Professor Reich points out that "the growth of government largess, accompanied by a distinctive system of law, is having profound consequences.

"It affects the underpinnings of individualism and independence. It influences the workings of the Bill of Rights. It has an impact on the power of private interests, in their relation to each other and to government. It is helping to create a new society."

The emergence of government as a major source of wealth--dispensing largess in the form of money, benefits, services and numerous other ways--has come to compete with and replace the traditional forms of wealth, especially that of private property, according to Reich. "The wealth of more and more Americans depends upon a relationship to government. Increasingly, Americans live on government largess--allocated by government on its own terms, . . ."

The article emphasizes that the new system of law accompanying this "new property" in the form of largess directly threatens the rights of citizen-clients who fall within its jurisdiction--and accordingly requires a broad range of new legal and judicial safeguards comparable to those which surround the old forms of property.

"If the day comes when most private ownership is supplanted by

government largess," asks Reich, "how then will governmental power over individuals be contained? What will dependence do to the American character? What will happen to the Constitution, and particularly the Bill of Rights, if their limits may be bypassed by purchase, and if people lack an independent base from which to assert their individuality and claim their rights? Without the security of the person which individual wealth provides and which largess fails to provide, what, indeed, will we become?"

Among those citizens most directly and deeply affected by the new law of largess, writes Professor Reich, are the millions of recipients of public assistance. "If the businessman, the teacher, and the professional man find themselves subject to the power of government largess, the man on public assistance is even more dependent. Welfare officials, often with the best of motivations, impose conditions intended to better a client, which sometimes are a deep invasion of his freedom of action."

Asserting that under the new system citizens may well be deprived of Fourth Amendment protections against unreasonable searches and seizures, Reich notes that "in the case of many public assistance programs, a power to make unannounced searches of recipients' premises is asserted by administrators." After detailing a particularly shocking instance of night raids upon the homes of recipients, he observes: "Since persons receiving public assistance fear the loss of their subsistence, they are unlikely to be able to assert their fourth amendment rights. They . . . must choose between their means of support and one of their constitutional rights."

Another instance of the deprivation of constitutional rights is seen by the author in the recent case of Flemming v. Nestor, in which the Supreme Court upheld a congressional law forfeiting retirement benefits under the Social Security old age insurance program for recipients convicted of deportable crimes (involving, in Nestor's case, past membership in the Communist Party long since terminated). Observing that the implications of the Nestor case are profound, Reich declares:

"No form of government largess is more personal or individual than an old age pension. No form is more clearly earned by the recipient, who, together with his employer, contributes to the Social Security fund during the years of his employment. . . . No form is more relied on, and more often thought of as property. No form is more vital to the independence and dignity of the individual.

"Yet under the philosophy of Congress and the Court, a man or woman, after a lifetime of work, has no rights which may not be taken

away to serve some public policy. The Court makes no effort to balance the interests at stake. The public policy that justifies cutting off benefits need not even be an important one or a wise one--so long as it is not utterly irrational, the Court will not interfere. In any clash between individual rights and public policy, the latter is automatically held to be superior."

In his attention to the jeopardized rights of welfare recipients and other citizens dependent upon government largess, Professor Reich sets forth a chain of arguments strikingly similar to the policies advanced over the years by the National Federation of the Blind. Among them are the proposition that public aid is received as a matter of right rather than of charity; that claims of recipients require strengthened procedural safeguards such as fair hearing and judicial review; and that, in his close and vexed relations with his government, the client-citizen more than ever "needs to possess, in whatever form, a small but sovereign island of his own."

With respect to constitutional limits on the power of government, Reich asserts: "A first principle should be that government must have no power to 'buy up' rights guaranteed by the Constitution"--such as the right of free speech, the right of immunity from self-incrimination, and the right of religious freedom, all of which have recently been upheld by the Supreme Court against governmental efforts to override them.

The concluding paragraphs of Reich's article, which set forth his basic recommendation for an evolutionary movement from the coercive law of largess to the constitutional law of right, deserve to be quoted at length:

"The proposals discussed . . . are by themselves far from adequate to assure the status of individual man with respect to largess. The problems go deeper. First, the growth of government power based on the dispensing of wealth must be kept within bounds. Second, there must be a zone of privacy for each individual beyond which neither government nor private power can push--a hiding place from the all-pervasive system of regulation and control. Finally, it must be recognized that we are becoming a society based upon relationship and status--status deriving primarily from source of livelihood. Status is so closely linked to personality that destruction of one may well destroy the other. Status must therefore be surrounded with the kind of safeguards once reserved for personality.

"Eventually those forms of largess which are closely linked to status must be deemed to be held as of right. Like property, such largess could be governed by a system of regulation plus civil or

criminal sanctions, rather than a system based upon denial, suspension or revocation. As things now stand, violations lead to forfeitures--outright confiscation of wealth and status. But there is surely no need for these drastic results. Confiscation, if used at all, should be the ultimate, not the most common and convenient penalty. The presumption should be that the professional man will keep his license, and the welfare recipient his pension. These interests should be "vested." If revocation is necessary, not by reason of the fault of the individual holder, but by reason of overriding demands of public policy, perhaps payment of just compensation would be appropriate. The individual should not bear the entire loss for a remedy primarily intended to benefit the community.

"The concept of right is most urgently needed with respect to benefits like unemployment compensation, public assistance, and old age insurance. These benefits are based upon a recognition that misfortune and deprivation are often caused by forces far beyond the control of the individual, such as technological change, variations in demand for goods, depressions, or wars. The aim of these benefits is to preserve the self-sufficiency of the individual, to rehabilitate him where necessary, and to allow him to be a valuable member of a family and a community; in theory they represent part of the individual's rightful share in the commonwealth. Only by making such benefits into rights can the welfare state achieve its goal of providing a secure minimum basis for individual well-being and dignity in a society where each man cannot be wholly the master of his own destiny.

"The highly organized, scientifically planned society of the future, governed for the good of its inhabitants, promises the best life that men have ever known. In place of the misery and injustice of the past there can be prosperity, leisure, knowledge, and rich opportunity open to all. In the rush of accomplishment, however, not all values receive equal attention; some are temporarily forgotten while others are pushed ahead. We have made provision for nearly everything, but we have made no adequate provision for individual man. . . .

"Above all, the time has come for us to remember what the framers of the Constitution knew so well--that 'a power over a man's subsistence amounts to a power over his will.' We cannot safely entrust our livelihoods and our rights to the discretion of authorities, examiners, boards of control, character committees, regents, or license commissioners. We cannot permit any official or agency to pretend to sole knowledge of the public good. We cannot put the independence of any man . . . wholly in the power of other men.

"If the individual is to survive in a collective society, he must

have protection against its ruthless pressures. There must be sanctuaries or enclaves where no majority can reach. To shelter the solitary human spirit does not merely make possible the fulfillment of individuals; it also gives society the power to change, to grow, and to regenerate, and hence to endure. These were the objects which property sought to achieve, and can no longer achieve. The challenge of the future will be to construct, for the society that is coming, institutions and laws to carry on this work. Just as the Homestead Act was a deliberate effort to foster individual values at an earlier time, so we must try to build an economic basis for liberty today--a Homestead Act for rootless twentieth century man. We must create a new property."

BARNARD LEVIN DIES

By Charles Little

Barnard Levin, of Boston, died on January 1, 1965, while listening to a radio program with his wife, Ruth.

"Barney," as he was affectionately called, was eighty-one, and a long-time member of the Associated Blind of Massachusetts. Several years ago, he pioneered in the development of the organization, at which time its membership covered only the Greater Boston area. He was an ardent Federationist and sacrificed much time and effort in endeavoring to make it possible for blind people to improve their lives socially and economically.

Following his graduation from the Perkins School for the Blind, he became a student in the New England Conservatory of Music, completing a full course and graduating with a concert pianist diploma. While at the Conservatory, Barney studied as a pianist under the tutelage of the celebrated Stasny, a pupil of Franz Liszt. For many years, he and his wife taught music, and he was extremely successful.

Barney and Ruth attended the NFB Convention in Philadelphia in 1963. He will be greatly missed.

(Editor's note: As one of his last acts, Barnard Levin wrote the letter which follows.)

Dear Doctor tenBroek:

It's wonderful having the MONITOR back again with you as editor. Enclosed you will find a check for a year's subscription for same. If you will send me a name, I will be glad to pass my copy along.

I was thrilled to learn about the IFB, and if my health was better, I should like to take an active part in helping it get organized.

Hoping to see you all in Washington, and with every good wish to you all, I remain,

Fraternally yours,
Barnard Levin

KANSAS GROUP RECORDS MONITOR

A valuable service for readers of THE BRAILLE MONITOR who prefer tape recordings to either the braille or inkprint editions is carried on by the Kansas City Association for the Blind. Under the guidance of Gwen Rittgers and E. E. (Cotton) Busby, well-known National Federationists in the Missouri affiliate, the Association's Braille Library records each issue of the MONITOR on tape and distributes its "talking magazine" in two mailings each month to a rapidly growing list of subscribers.

Owing to the reluctance of many subscribers to return the tapes, however--which are sent out on loan, not as gifts, to the borrowers--the future of this excellent tape recording facility is in serious jeopardy.

"We have tried everything we know to get the borrowers to return them promptly," writes Cotton Busby, "but nothing seems to help. As of this writing (end of December), we still have not received all the first October mailing. If it were just a few tapes, that would be one thing--but this behavior seems to be the rule."

Perhaps when the borrower-listeners of the Kansas City Association's MONITOR tape service hear these words, they will get the message--and return the favor--thus helping a dedicated group of volunteer readers to circulate the MONITOR to an ever-widening circle of blind people.

THE ADVANTAGES OF BLINDNESS

"Douglas MacFarland holds a doctorate from New York University. He got the degree by going to night school.

"'That's the nice thing about being blind,' Louis H. Rives, Jr., kidded him. 'You can read as well at night as during the day.'"

So began an article, "Three Men Find Blindness an Advantage," by Washington EVENING STAR reporter John Stacks, later reprinted in PERFORMANCE. Besides MacFarland and Rives, the newspaper story featured George Majors, well-known National Federationist.

"A large part of their personal lives has been focused on being blind," the article said of the three men. "Their professional lives also have centered on blindness--helping others to live with it.

"Rives, formerly chief of the division of services to the blind in VRA, has been named head of a newly created planning group for the whole VRA (Vocational Rehabilitation Administration) program. MacFarland, formerly director of the Virginia Commission for the Visually Handicapped, has taken Rives' old job. Majors is a professional staff member of the division.

"Dealing with the handicapped is their business. They feel that being blind themselves is a benefit for their jobs. 'It's really an advantage,' Rives said, 'since we actually demonstrate that handicaps can be overcome.'"

The newspaper reported that Rives had traveled about 35,000 miles last year, without a companion. MacFarland recently returned from New York while Majors was preparing to embark for Ohio. None of the three had ever had the kind of instruction in travel techniques which is now standard procedure in rehabilitation centers and programs, it was said.

"A new area of job possibility is opening in computer programming, MacFarland pointed out. Often this is a job a blind person can do just as well as a sighted person. About 5,000 blind people were successfully placed in all types of jobs last year through the VRA and the state rehabilitation programs.

"MacFarland has his doctorate in rehabilitation and Rives has a law degree from the College of William and Mary. Majors earned a master's degree in counseling at the University of Illinois."

The successful careers of these three men may not demonstrate the "advantages" of blindness--but they do show emphatically what can be done when full advantage is taken of mental abilities in the face of physical disabilities.

MONITOR MINIATURES

Don Capps, the National Federation's second vice president, has received an award as the "Handicapped Citizen of the Year" for his home community of Columbia, South Carolina. Capps, who is associated with the Columbia branch of Colonial Life and Accident Insurance Company, accepted the plaque in January ceremonies from State Lt. Governor Robert E. McNair. . . . More than 100 students at the California Orientation Center for the Blind honored one of their teachers, Lawrence Q. Lewis, at a surprise testimonial dinner February 7. Students, former students and staff members of the Albany center were honoring Lewis on the occasion of his retirement after 14 years as an instructor at the orientation center.

The presidents of two New Jersey organizations of the blind have asked Governor Richard J. Hughes not to sign a bill to require the labeling of articles made by blind workmen, according to a news report in the TRENTONIAN January 12. Such labeling is "no better than a beggar's tin cup," said Norbert Cifelli, leader of the Associated Blind of New Jersey, and Robert H. Owens, head of the Trenton Association of the Blind.

Major problems in sheltered workshops are explored in the January-February (1965) issue of the JOURNAL OF REHABILITATION, with contributions from numerous workshop agencies but none at all from the organized blind. . . . Calvin Wooten, president of the Alabama Federation of the Blind, is the subject of a lengthy feature article in THE PRINTER'S DEVIL (December 1964), describing the success of his firm, the Wooten Piano Company, located in Anniston, Alabama.

Reorganization of both the Maryland and Baltimore welfare departments was recommended recently by study consultants, who emphasized the need for modern business management techniques and increased efficiency of administration. But what about improving welfare? In New York, the establishment of a committee to study the reasons for rising state welfare costs at a time when the state's economy reached a record high has been announced by Governor Rockefeller, who

referred to the discrepancy as "the most serious economic paradox of our times."

Winifred Downing of San Francisco, former home economics teacher at the California Orientation Center for the Blind, recently was honored with the Teacher of the Year Award presented by the Hadley School for the Blind, Winnetka, Illinois. Mrs. Downing has been a teacher with the Hadley School for 15 years, the last nine as a correspondence instructor. . . . A \$1.3 million annual increase in payments to recipients for four major welfare programs, including a one-dollar increase for recipients of aid to the blind, was recently approved by the Colorado Welfare Board.

Pennsylvania Governor William Scranton, in his annual message to the state legislature, said his administration would seek a large increase in funds for public assistance "so that Pennsylvania can more nearly meet the humane objective of providing for the truly destitute according to minimum standards of health and decency." . . . Find It in a Song, a book for teaching music to young children, has been brailled on plastic with many raised illustrations. Copies of the book and revision sheets are available free to schools from Marie Martin, 11021 East Boulevard, Cleveland, Ohio 44106--with inkprint copies obtainable from the same source at \$1.50 each.

The Empire State Association adopted the following provocative resolution at its convention last fall: "Whereas, the ESAB believes that placement in gainful employment is not moving rapidly enough to keep pace with the increasing number of trained blind searching for such employment; be it resolved that the ESAB . . . instruct its legislative committee, again this year as in the past year, to act in the urgent pressing forward toward passage of the ESAB bill, which provides for tax exemption being granted by the state to the employer to the full extent of annual salary of an employed blind worker in the industrial field."

From Canada comes a report of a turkey farmer (unnamed) who, after losing his sight, resumed his work with such success that, together with his wife and two hired workers, he operates what has become the largest turkey farm in the province of Quebec. . . . The Third Pan-Pacific Rehabilitation Conference will be held in Tokyo, Japan, from April 13 to 17 this year. Host is the Japanese National Committee of the International Society for Crippled Children, 66 Higashi I-chome, Ikebukuro, Toshima-ku, Tokyo.

The Zenith Club of the Blind, of Phoenix, Arizona, sponsored a gala youth dance recently at the Phoenix Center for the Blind. Mayor

Milt Graham commended the club, which is an affiliate of the Arizona and the National Federations of the Blind, for making possible the festive dance for young adult blind persons and their escorts. . . . A new yearbook, Blindness 1964, has been published by the American Association of Workers for the Blind as its first attempt to produce an annual publication. Translated into braille and talking book form by the Library of Congress, the yearbook contains articles summarizing accomplishments in work for the blind during the past year.

Ralph M. Adams, blind shop steward at the Hart Manufacturing Co. of Hartford, Connecticut, was the subject of a feature article in PERFORMANCE (December 1964), calling attention to his successful activities in the elective post of shop steward in which he represents his fellow union workers in labor-management conferences. . . . A new bimonthly publication, THE PIONEER, by and for the handicapped in Washington, D.C. has been initiated by the Nation's Capital Chapter of the National Association of the Physically Handicapped.

Chapter presidents of the Associated Blind of Massachusetts met January 10 at Boston's Parker House, pursuant to a convention resolution. With State President Manuel J. Rubin acting as chairman, the meeting was so productive that another has been scheduled for April at Springfield.

Due to the death of Harry Wilker, president-elect of the Maryland Council of the Blind, William J. Appel has been elevated from the vice-presidency to the presidency of the MCB. In turn Appel has appointed Mrs. Marjorie Flack, last year's vice-president, to a renewed term in that post. The new president has also appointed Charles Johnson as treasurer, to replace Mrs. Thelma Pylant who was forced to resign the position for reasons of ill health.

A newly developed "ultra-sonic" travel aid for the blind, invented by Dr. Leslie Kay of the Manchester (England) Technical College and manufactured by Ultra Electronics of London, is being given a tryout by the Division of Services for the Blind of Kentucky's rehabilitation program. . . . The Boston Catholic Guild for All the Blind is trying something new: an adjustment center for elderly blind persons. The Guild has transformed an old residential home into a training center offering individualized rehabilitation services for elderly blind men and women from any part of the U.S., without restriction as to race or religious affiliation.

Insurance against loss of vision is now available from Bonded Vision Services, Inc., of Minneapolis, Minnesota. In the firm's brochure there is no reference to "gainful occupation"; instead the

insurance service is said to pay "on the degree of impairment without using the yardstick of earning capacity.". . . Mary Drake Coles, of Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts, is continuing her career as a successful painter after losing her sight five years ago--and despite a paralyzed left arm incurred in childhood. She recently announced plans to return to Paris' Left Bank where she formerly painted and exhibited during the 1920's.

Gene Raschi of Somerville, Massachusetts, has recorded his thirteenth "pop" tune, to be released soon under the Pharoah label. Gene and his wife are former students of the Perkins School for the Blind; they have six children. . . . Francis M. Stanton of Bennetsville, South Carolina--reputedly the only blind coroner in the country--received the Donald C. Capps Award for outstanding service to the blind during last year's convention of the South Carolina Aurora Club of the Blind.

In Hawaii, the Governor's Committee at a rally during National Employ the Handicapped Week heard a report by Chairman James A. McConnell concerning a massive survey of all occupations in the entire state to determine their suitability for the handicapped. The survey is being financed by private grants and trust funds from the Honolulu Chamber of Commerce.

A fund to support activities aimed at the rehabilitation of disabled persons has been established in Washington, D.C., by friends and colleagues of the late Major General Melvin J. Maas. General Maas, who was blind, headed the President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped for 10 years until his death last April. . . . Lee Billiel of Greenfield, Massachusetts, has returned to his hobby of archery after being blinded in an accident last June. Billiel is now aided by his father who directs the aim by pressing his index finger in the blind man's back, moving the finger up or down, left or right to indicate direction, according to a report in LISTEN.

The local fire chief of Great Falls, Montana, was named "Employer of the Year" during National Employ the Handicapped Week, both for the fire department's record in hiring disabled persons, and the time and care devoted to training the handicapped as communications operators. . . . The installation of six new acoustical recording booths at the Massachusetts Correctional Institution in Walpole has reportedly won the gratitude of inmates, who volunteer their leisure time to record books for the use of blind readers.

That blind persons read more books than people with sight is one of the findings of a 1961 study of reading habits conducted by the

American Foundation for the Blind and reported in a recent issue of the American Library Association Bulletin. . . . A 39-year-old blind German has climbed Europe's highest mountain, according to a Reuters dispatch from Munich. Siegfried Zinnecker scaled 15,782-foot Mount Blanc recently in a two-day ascent with four companions.

NEWS OF THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION

By Dr. Isabelle L. D. Grant

"Yes, I shall be glad to take blind children into my sighted school, if you will provide textbooks in braille for them to study."

It took no more than the willingness of an understanding and humanitarian-minded principal of the school in Kathmandu, Nepal, to launch an international project which will spell the difference between literacy and illiteracy for blind children in that far-off country--which lies northeast of India on the borders of Tibet and Red China.

Although books as the tools of learning are paramount, obviously a teacher-training program had first to be set up. As this program progresses, the time draws nearer when books will be needed and practicable.

Six textbooks in arithmetic, English and history at different grade levels were supplied by the principal and brought to our own country, for there was no braille equipment in Nepal, no knowledge of braille nor any duplicating facilities. Education for blind children simply did not exist. The six books were written in English, the school being an English medium, or English-speaking school.

Contact was made with Mrs. Ethel Schuman, director of the Los Angeles Service Guild for the Blind, who with the help of members of her guild brailled all six of the books, establishing the master copy. Ten copies were then prepared on Brailion paper, by the Termoform process, and each volume bound. The outlay was in the neighborhood of \$400, for the cost of the paper and the Brailion.

Services of the guild members were donated, as was the proof-reading service. Rotary clubs, one Chamber of Commerce group, and

other service organizations were approached for the financing of the project.

Sixty books are now ready, ten copies of each volume, all attractively bound. An auspicious beginning in the way of tools--for a program which will initiate the blind children of Nepal into education and the community.

This kind of foreign aid really aids!

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Since her return to her home in Karachi, Pakistan, Dr. Fatima Shah has not been idle. We remember her hilarious description of the scene in the Japanese airport when she wowed the officials with her demands that they get her on an airplane for Phoenix, Arizona.

Mishaps with baggage seem to have dogged Fatima's footsteps across the world. In Germany, she found it necessary to leave some of her baggage, including a record player she had just purchased. The excess freight cost was prohibitive. Fatima hopes to retrieve the cherished equipment in due time, with the cooperation of Karachi transportation facilities.

Rejoining her charming daughter, Gala, was the highlight of the Pakistan homecoming for Fatima. Her fame and activities in the U.S. had already reached Pakistan, for she was requested to journey to the new capital, Islamabad, in the northern section of the country, to speak before the convention of the All Pakistan Women's Association on her work and her plans for promotion of the interests of blind people in Pakistan.

APWA, as it is usually called, then allocated funds for the work of the Pakistan Association of the Blind, as a result of Dr. Shah's analysis of the needs and goals of the organization. Following the convention Dr. Shah met with President Mohammad Ayub Khan, who displayed keen interest in her projected plans for her own work and for the Pakistan Association, of which she is president.

Following her visit to Islamabad, Dr. Shah journeyed to Lahore, where she visited officials of P.A.B., including Mr. Ishfaq Siddiqi, secretary general of the organization, who is a faithful reader of THE BRAILLE MONITOR and author of a recent article in our magazine. Dr. Shah also visited integrated classes for blind children, as well as the Office of the Inspector of Schools for the Deaf and Blind.

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A month's bout with influenza did not prevent Mr. Lee Au Kow from writing to tell us of his activities after recuperation in his native city of Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. In thanking us for the copy of the President's Proclamation of White Cane Day in the U.S., Au Kow took steps to make the proclamation known through local newspapers and government offices.

Au Kow is president of the Selangor Society of the Blind, where his experiences of last summer are proving of great material as well as moral benefit. "America, and you Americans, have become very dear to me," he says. Au Kow himself, in spite of his youth, lives up to his principles; he has the welfare of the blind of his country at heart. For instance, when certain groups attempted recently to reduce the already pitifully small allowance to blind persons, Mr. Lee and his colleagues in the Selangor Society set about collecting information and statistics to support their contention that the aid must not be discontinued.

The SSB is also making contact with business firms and with the government for the purchase of articles such as cane wastepaper baskets and other cane goods, in order to increase the earning power of individual blind Malaysians. In sending all Federationists the greetings of his organization, Au Kow says with his usual humility and candor: "Though we cannot do anything comparable to what the NFB does, our blind people are beginning to take active leadership in solving our own problems and improving our status as first-class citizens of our country. What I learned in the U.S. will be useful in helping us to achieve this status."

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Ceylon, too, is undergoing a transformation, since Rienzi Alagiyawanna returned home to Mahawewa. Mr. Alagiyawanna is the principal of the school for the blind and the deaf--which has been a single school with emphasis placed on the education of the deaf, at the expense of the blind children in the group. When I visited Ceylon and noted the situation, I was told that this condition could never be changed, for it had always been so.

It took Rienzi's persistence, energy and educational background to achieve the separation of the school and to set up a distinct unit for the education of blind children. This too has been done with government approval, and is indeed a forward step in Singhalese education. As president of the Ceylon Association of the Blind, Mr. Alagiyawanna has infused new energy into the group, working toward job opportunities both in workshops and in open industry through progressive legislation.

We look forward to the time when Mr. Alagiyawanna himself will aspire to senatorial status, thereby being an example to his fellow blind as well as evidence to his people and his government of the potentiality of blind persons when given opportunity. Because of local conditions, progress will be slow in Ceylon--but sure.

Rienzi's goals include the establishment of a braille duplicating press, so that all the blind children may have textbooks. He wants more of the blind youth of his country to be provided with adequate education, and to this end is working toward the building of another school as well as toward the integration of blind children into the regular schools when the necessary textbooks become available. A master of Tamil, Singha-
lese, English and German, Rienzi Alagiyawanna--himself blind--is a leader both of the blind and of the sighted.

GERMANY'S ORGANIZED BLIND JOIN I. F. B.

The organized blind of the Federal Republic of Germany--members of a country-wide federation entitled the Deutsche Blindenverband--have voted to affiliate with the International Federation of the Blind.

The president of the West German organization, Dr. Alphonse Gottwald, wrote in a letter to I. F. B. President Jacobus tenBroek: "I have the honor of informing you that the Deutsche Blindenverband e. V., 532 Bad Godesberg, Mozartstrasse 18, West Germany, has resolved to join the International Federation of the Blind."

In a parallel action the Bund der Kriegsblinden Deutschlands, an organization of the war-blinded in Germany, was also reported to have approved a resolution calling for affiliation with the International Federation.

Approximately 80 percent of the more than 30,000 civilian blind persons in West Germany are members of the national Deutsche Blindenverband, according to Dr. Horst Geissler, vice president of the organization. The present association was founded following World War II as the successor of the Reichsdeutsche Blindenverband, which had been in existence since 1912.

The Deutsche Blindenverband comprises some 14 regional

organizations of the blind, of which the oldest is the Allgemeiner Blindenverband of Berlin--headed by Herr Alfred Stoeckel, who was instrumental in the move to affiliate with the I. F. B.

The national German organization "cares for all the blind, whether they are members of our organization or not," according to Vice President Geissler. "We have our own center for rehabilitation, a number of centers for recreation--about 12 at present--and a larger number of workshops. Together with the organization of the war blind, we operate a number of talking book libraries and publish several newspapers and magazines in braille and inkprint."

Dr. Gottwald, who has been president of the Deutsche Blindenverband since 1949, lost his sight as a schoolboy and went on to study law at the University of Marburg. After graduation he became a practicing lawyer and later a judge in Berlin. Since 1953 he has devoted full time to active leadership of the national organization, and has been instrumental in the achievement of favorable legislation for the blind of Germany.

Dr. Geissler, vice president of the Deutsche Blindenverband since 1953, was also elected last year as president of one of Germany's regional organizations, the Blindenverband Nordheim, which represents the blind of the Rhineland region with headquarters in Dusseldorf. Dr. Geissler studied law at the University of Freiburg and at the University of Gottingen, where he also specialized in economics and the study of mass communication media. After a period as legal advisor to a private firm, he joined the federal ministry of the interior in 1952, where he is currently employed in the department for cultural affairs.

Dr. Geissler, Herr Stoeckel and Herr Ludwig (president of the war-blinded Bund) were among the German delegation attending the World Council Assembly last summer in New York, where they were of great help in the initial steps of formulating the constitution for the newly organized International Federation of the Blind.

WHITE CANE DAY URGED IN WEST GERMANY

The proclamation of White Cane Day by President Johnson, as an annual observance to be celebrated each October 15, has galvanized efforts in other nations to achieve a comparable recognition of the

symbolic independence of the blind. Among the countries moving affirmatively toward the establishment of a National White Cane Day is West Germany (the Federal Republic of Germany), under the leadership of its active and influential organized blind movement.

Dr. Horst Geissler, vice president of the Deutsche Blindenverband--newest national affiliate of the International Federation of the Blind--writes as follows on this subject:

"I was very interested in the proclamation of the White Cane Safety Day in your country. We shall publish a German translation, and we shall ask for such a day on the 15th of October in Germany too. In this way the 15th of October can become a White Cane Safety Day all over the world because, I am sure, other countries will follow us.

"On page 37 of THE BRAILLE MONITOR for November, I found a notice that the blind in Germany do not use the white cane but a black band. This information is not correct. The official symbol of the blind in Germany is the white cane. It was introduced by a law. In former times the blind could use a yellow band with three black points on it. Now they can use this symbol too. But it is a symbol for all handicapped persons and not a symbol exclusively of the blind."

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